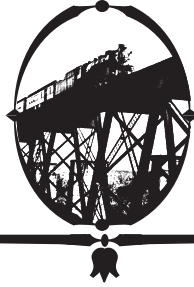


# HIGH BRIDGE PROGRESS



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## Progress on the master plan

**T**he High Bridge Trail State Park Master Plan Advisory Committee has been hard at work developing goals and objectives that will guide the park's management and development. The committee's work was reviewed at an Aug. 17 public meeting and will again be part of an Oct. 19 public input session (see story below for details).

The committee developed six goals to guide the park. Each goal contains between two and 14 specific objectives. Briefly, the six goals are to:

1. **Protect the park's natural and cultural resources**
2. **Provide day-use recreational opportunities**
3. **Provide overnight facilities**
4. **Interpret the park's historic and natural attributes to make High Bridge a focal point for the Heart of Virginia region**
5. **Partner with local governments, businesses and other organizations to enhance the entire region**
6. **Manage the park to foster public trust**

**Goal #1.** In protecting the park's natural, scenic and cultural resources specific objectives call for actively protecting the resources on the park from native plants and natural communities to stabilizing and restoring historic structures and protecting known archeological sites. Protecting view sheds and adjacent resources through land conservation strategies with local governments and by working with neighbors and adjacent landowners is also cited.

**Goal #2.** calls for the rail-bed to be converted into a multi-purpose, non-motorized trail with trail-heads, concession operations, picnicking, shelters and restrooms. Connecting with local communities including extending the trail to depots in Burkesville and Pamplin City are also objective subjects. Encouraging development of local trail-related businesses by the private sector and promoting the trail as part of a burgeoning system of trails in the Heart of Virginia Region are also key. Closely related, **Goal #3** calls for the park to provide camping opportunities and encouraging the development of overnight accommodations, including equestrian camping, by the private sector.

Blessed with a rich history and sites that can be used to relay stories from Native Americans, European settlement, the Civil War, Civil Rights and transportation in the 20th century, **Goal #4** lists a number of objectives to help interpret those sites and tell the many stories the park has to offer in the context of the history of the region. All of these elements would be contained in an interpretive plan to be developed for the park.

Just as High Bridge Trail State Park physically connects counties and towns, historic sites and natural resources, **Goal #5** realizes it can also serve as a focal point connecting a host of partners in the area. It calls for working with local governments, conservation and historical groups, educational institutes and neighboring landowners to conserve the region's scenic, natural and cultural resources. It also calls for partnerships to promote local tourism and

outdoor recreational opportunities in the region. Fostering community support and volunteerism opportunities in the park are also the subject of an objective.

**Goal #6.** The appropriate management of the park is the subject of the last goal. This starts with securing the park with appropriate gates, signs and patrols. It continues with adequate staff, vehicles and equipment needed to manage the park. Objectives also cover developing appropriate offices, maintenance facilities and staff residences and providing facilities and services that provide for the visitors safety and enjoyment.

**For a complete copy of the park's goals and objectives go to the High Bridge Trail page of the DCR website at**

**<http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/prr/highbridge.htm>**

**They are included in the August 24 meeting minutes.**

### **Public meeting to be held Oct. 19**

The second High Bridge Trail State Park public input meeting will be held at 7 p.m., Oct. 19, in the third floor board room of the Prince Edward Courthouse in Farmville. Maps with tentative locations for park facilities, projects and service areas identified in the park's goals and objectives document will be presented.

Approximately 50 people attended the first public meeting August 17 where they reviewed the park's draft goals and objectives. As a part of that review there was active discussion concerning issues such as visitor safety during hunting season, authorized vehicular access to High Bridge, enhancing emergency service response time on the trail, making trail signs multi-lingual and more.